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To: Supervisor Hilda L. Solis, Chair
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From: Sachi A. Hamai
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REPORT BACK ON THE FEASIBILITY OF ESTABLISHING AN ANIMAL SHELTER FOR SMALL ANIMALS ON THE GROUNDS OF PITCHESS DETENTION CENTER (ITEM NO. 11, AGENDA OF JULY 26, 2016)

On July 26, 2016, the Board instructed the Chief Executive Officer (CEO) to work with the Department of Animal Care and Control (ACC) and the Sheriff's Department (Sheriff) to report back on the feasibility of establishing an animal shelter for small animals on the grounds of the Pitchess Detention Center (PDC).

Background of Inmate-Trainer Programs

Several programs have been initiated at correctional institutions in the United States in efforts to provide vocational training to inmates, while increasing the adoptability of homeless dogs. The objectives of the training programs vary from teaching the dogs basic obedience skills, making homeless dogs more adoptable, or developing specially trained dogs that will assist persons living with disabilities. Selected dogs from local animal shelters are brought to the correctional institutions and live in the cells of the inmate-trainers during the duration of the training program.

The inmate-trainers are taught how to train the dogs by professional dog trainers. The dogs are returned to the animal shelters at the conclusion of the training program as highly desirable adoption candidates, or placed with disabled pet owners who require service dogs for assistance. Inmates who learn dog training skills while incarcerated benefit from having a marketable skill upon their release. Most training programs are between eight and twelve weeks in duration.

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Vocational Animal Programs at PDC

For over a decade, the Sheriff has offered academic and vocational programs to inmates in an effort to provide "life changing skills and education which will help them to succeed upon release, and to reduce recidivism."¹ Some of the most successful programs at the various custody facilities have incorporated the care of animals in the curriculum. These programs provide a mutual benefit – vocational skills training for inmates and an increase in adoptability for animals. While the programmatic benefits can be significant, the implementation of the training programs must be carefully tailored to ensure the safety of inmates, staff, and animals.

Current and previous inmate programs are described as follows:

Dog Grooming Course

The dog grooming course is designed to provide knowledge, training, and practical work experience for students preparing for employment in the pet grooming industry. Since 2004, the course has only been offered at PDC, and students learn basic canine physiology, career terminology, paw and nail care, use of grooming equipment, science of bathing animals, recognizing aggressive behaviors, and identifying health problems. Over the past year, 39 inmates participated in 147 sessions which included 60 hours of course work and hands-on grooming. A total of 760 dogs primarily from the neighboring Castaic Animal Care Center were groomed, and nearly all the dogs from the Castaic Animal Care Center were adopted. The Sheriff will continue to offer this course to the inmates.

Canine Training

From 2014 to 2016, the Sheriff operated vocational dog training classes at several custody facilities, including PDC South. The classes, taught by professional trainers, paired dogs, provided by an outside vendor, with inmates in an effort to teach them marketable vocational skills, while concurrently providing obedience training to the dogs in order to increase future adoptability. The program was subsequently expanded to include dogs used to interact with and comfort inmates with mental illness.

Although there were significant benefits with the program, there were also a variety of challenges. Initially, the dogs used in these programs were housed in the jail facility, and lived with the inmates in the dorms. However, dogs would bond with their trainers and as a result become territorial. The Sheriff attempted to mitigate this concern by allowing the dogs to be housed with the inmates Monday through Thursday every week

¹ Sheriff's Department, Inmate Services Bureau, *Education Based Incarceration Program Guide*, Revised August 29, 2016

but the vendor lacked the resources to move the dogs in and out of the jail on a constant basis. The contract concluded in June 2016 and was not continued.

The Sheriff is currently exploring an inmate rehabilitation program that would allow certified therapy dogs from an outside vendor to bond with the mentally ill inmates with the goal of improving inmate behavior. The dogs would not reside on the premises with the inmates and would not be from ACC.

Feasibility of Establishing an Animal Shelter at PDC

A PDC program that focuses on teaching inmates dog training skills, while increasing the adoptability of dogs under the care of ACC is feasible. However, ACC and Sheriff both agree that canines should not be allowed to live individually with their inmate-trainers due to the barracks style housing at PDC and the issues with territorial dogs. Under a modified inmate-trainer training program, dogs would be brought to a new kennel and training facility at PDC for training by inmate-trainers in cohorts of eight dogs for a ten-week program. At the conclusion of each training program, the dogs would be returned to ACC for subsequent adoption into new homes. It is estimated that a total of 40 dogs each year could be trained through this program.

Potential Capital Costs

In response to the Board motion, it is feasible to construct a shelter with kennels at PDC to house the dogs on-site. The facility would be shared with the existing dog grooming program. The shelter would need to be designed and constructed to endure the extreme heat and cold conditions at PDC and to maintain a safe temperature for both animals and staff. Additional features to consider for the proposed shelter would include air exchanges to reduce disease and promote wellness, sound attenuation features to reduce stress to animals, and a quarantine/isolation area for animals with illness or injury. Plumbing and electrical utilities would need to be provided to the facility. Furthermore, due to existing easements, utilities, and other on-site restrictions, the placement of the shelter in an area that is secured and easily accessible by Sheriff and ACC personnel may be challenging and require further review.

The total project cost will vary depending on the location at PDC and an estimate can be prepared in collaboration with the Sheriff, ACC, and the Department of Public Works, once a location at PDC is selected and restrictions are identified.

Operating Costs

The annual costs associated with operating an animal shelter at PDC will be primarily based on the staffing, services, supplies and utility requirements. The Sheriff estimates that it will require at least 3.0 Deputies and 1.0 Sergeant to oversee the program and supervise the inmates.

ACC estimates that it will require 1.0 Animal Control Manager and 2.0 professional dog trainers. An Animal Control Manager is required to oversee the Department's responsibilities and management of the professional trainers, dog selection, medical treatment and services required by the dogs, documentation, grant writing, and other related activities. The dog trainers are recommended based on the industry standard ratio of one trainer for every eight dog/trainer teams. The two professional dog trainers would be responsible for participating in the selection of dogs for the program, teaching the inmate-trainers how to train and manage their assigned dogs, assessing the progress and performance of the training, developing remediation plans for nonresponsive dogs, assessing the performance of the inmate-trainers, documenting the progress, and evaluating the success of the program. Two trainers are necessary to provide oversight as well as coverage of one trainer's absence so the program does not need to be suspended mid-cohort.

Service and supply costs include facility maintenance and repair, dog food, cleaners and disinfectants, training equipment and supplies, and other related costs. ACC estimates that service and supply costs for this program include one-time start up costs of \$25,000 (which includes training equipment, leashes, bowls and beds), and ongoing annual costs of \$18,000 (which includes food and disinfectant). Furthermore, it is anticipated that the labor for cleaning the facility and caring for the dogs would be provided at no cost by PDC inmates.

Apart from other service and supply costs, utility costs will vary depending on the location, scope and design of the facility and may be increased to conceptualize a more robust program and/or animal shelter development.

The annual costs for the aforementioned positions and services and supplies are summarized in the following chart:

Position	# Required	Cost Each	Total
Sheriff Deputy	3.0	\$ 189,000	\$ 567,000
Sheriff Sergeant	1.0	\$ 239,000	\$ 239,000
Animal Control Manager	1.0	\$ 149,000	\$ 149,000
Dog Trainer	2.0	\$ 120,000	\$ 240,000
Annual Staffing Costs	7.0		\$ 1,195,000
Annual Services and Supplies Costs			\$ 18,000
Annual Utilities		To Be Determined	
Total Estimated Annual Operating Costs			\$1,213,000

Regional Animal Care Capability

The Castaic Animal Care Center, located at 31044 Charlie Canyon Road, is approximately 1.5 miles from PDC and is currently capable of managing the regional need for services. ACC does not have a pressing need for an additional animal care center in this region of the County at this time and is finalizing its master plan recommendations, which will address expanded capacity for its facilities. The priority areas in greatest need of expansion and renovation will be identified in the Master Plan.

Conclusion

Although there are significant benefits to expanding canine training and other vocational programs which incorporate animals with inmates, ACC and Sheriff do not recommend the construction of an animal shelter at PDC at this time as it would be cost prohibitive, expanded animal care capacity is not yet needed in the region, and the Sheriff is currently exploring other cost-effective programmatic options. It is recommended that both Sheriff and ACC continue to collaborate on existing and additional programs that provide significant benefits to the animals and inmates but limit capital and operational costs.

If you have any questions or require additional information, please contact Rene Phillips, Public Safety, at (213) 974-1478.

SAH:JJ:RCP

MI:cc

c: Executive Office, Board of Supervisors
 County Counsel
 Sheriff
 Animal Care and Control
 Public Works